



# CAMPUS OPERATIONS BEST PRACTICES

*5 Ways* to Deliver a Higher Degree of Care  
for Colleges and Universities





*To make a difference,  
every person, every day.*  
**ABM's Mission**



To address increasingly complex challenges, such as limited funding, staffing shortages, and aging infrastructure, colleges and universities need to operate on a higher level. That means you need to be more efficient, make smarter decisions, address stakeholder concerns, and ultimately implement a higher degree of care on your campus.

***For more than a century,*** higher education institutions have turned to ABM to address their most pressing campus challenges. In response to these top concerns, we've developed five best practices to help you unlock new efficiencies, insights, and methods to care for your campus.



**1 OVERCOME  
STAFFING CHALLENGES**



**2 INCREASE ENROLLMENT WITH  
HIGH-QUALITY FACILITIES**



**3 IMPROVE THE  
STUDENT EXPERIENCE**



**4 PRIORITIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY  
AND SUSTAINABILITY**



**5 ENHANCE OPERATIONAL  
EXCELLENCE**



# 1 OVERCOME STAFFING CHALLENGES



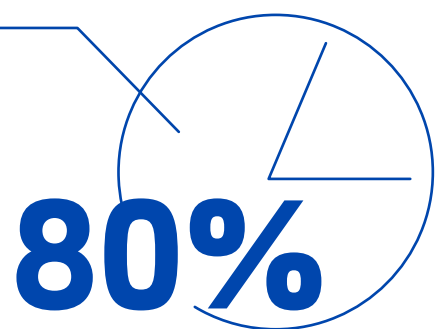
AVERAGE TIME TO  
FILL A POSITION

ABM<sup>®</sup>  
**13 DAYS**

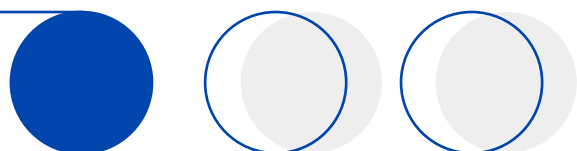
UNIVERSITY  
**60 DAYS**

Colleges and universities face significant staffing challenges, including attracting and retaining qualified talent, managing turnover, and offering competitive pay and benefits. By identifying the right people and equipping them with the right tools for productivity and accountability, you can leverage labor more efficiently.

*80% of candidates say they want faster response times from recruiters.*



*1/3 say they have quit applying for jobs because of slow response times.<sup>1</sup>*





## BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

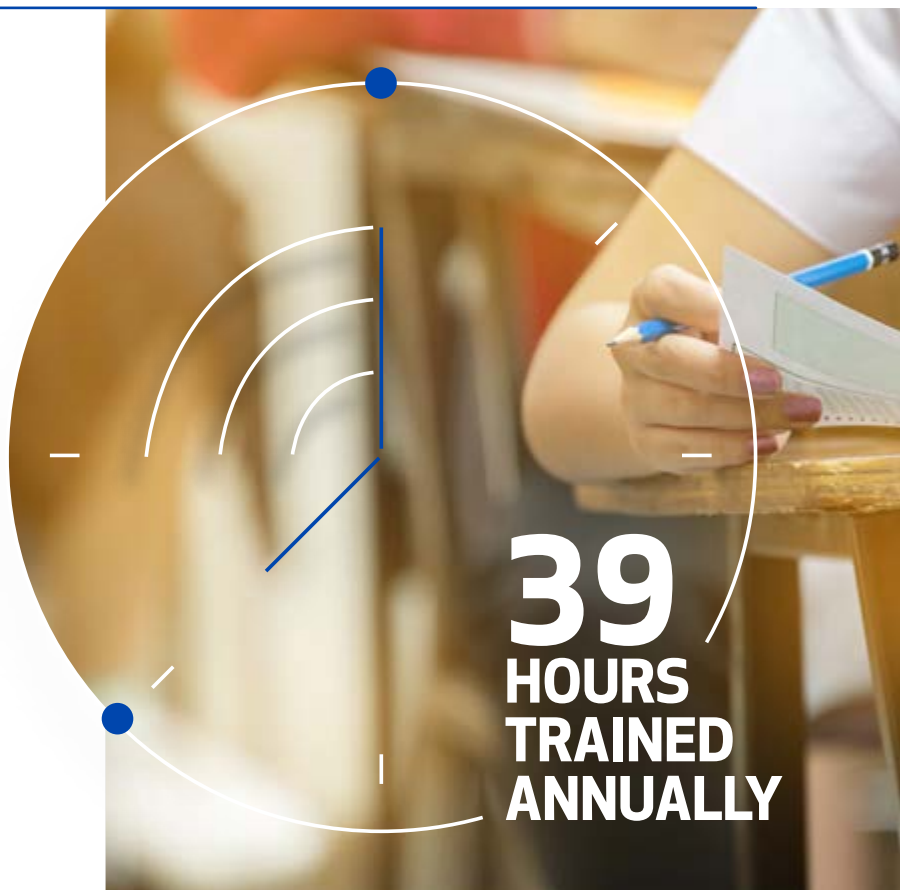
### HIRING

*Streamlined staffing processes enable you to hire qualified, well-trained, and properly equipped facility personnel.*

- **Focused Hiring Team**  
Assign talent acquisition staff to focus solely on hiring for skilled trades. Whereas many university HR departments are responsible for hiring a wide range of positions, our dedicated hiring team will more effectively create, recruit, and hire skilled trades.
- **Accurate Job Descriptions**  
We design jobs with realistic requirements aligned your campus' strategic needs and goals, so it's easier to attract the right candidates.
- **Competitive Messaging**  
ABM highlights your institution's culture and values, competitive wages, comprehensive benefits, and career development opportunities to attract great candidates.
- **Exceptional Candidate Experience**  
We demonstrate your institution's values and culture by maintaining regular communication with your talent pool and accelerating the hiring process.



*ABM service-level team members receive an average of **39 hours** of training per year, including safety awareness and regulatory-related training.*



## TRAINING

*Provide ongoing training and professional development opportunities to improve team member performance and service quality.*

- **Comprehensive Onboarding**  
Welcome new team members with an orientation program and onboarding playbook to help them navigate their first 90 days.
- **Safety and Site-Specific Training**  
Through ongoing training, we ensure team members are knowledgeable of industry standards and the needs of the facilities they work in.
- **Culture and Values Training**  
We deliver annual training aligned with our Code of Business Conduct, including harassment prevention, management training programs, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training for all team members.
- **Frontline Leader Program**  
ABM's Frontline Leader Program offers education and resources that equip frontline leaders to be successful in their roles.



# RETAINING TALENT

*ABM values and prioritizes team member retention, recognizing that it is crucial to maintaining the quality of facility services.*

- **Engagement Initiatives**

ABM increases employee engagement by providing team members with opportunities to provide feedback, volunteer, donate, and participate in wellness activities.

- **Comprehensive Benefits**

ABM offers a range of comprehensive benefits, including health and welfare benefits, retirement savings, worker's compensation coverage, and paid time off.

- **Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Our proactive outreach programs foster an inclusive workforce where everyone is seen, heard, and feels like they belong.

- **Team Member Appreciation**

Leadership at all levels support the efforts, resources, and tools necessary to honor the hard work and dedication of facility service workers.



# CAREER ADVANCEMENT

*To attract and retain talented team members, provide career advancement opportunities for employees at all levels.*

- **Career Framework**

An established career framework organizes roles and functions across the company, ensuring consistency in job titles, responsibilities, and greater transparency for career mobility and development.

- **Apprenticeship Programs**

To nurture internal employees and prepare for future staffing needs, provide apprenticeship programs and create succession plans for technical and service staff.

- **System Talent Profiles**

To maintain a network of talented, engaged candidates, ABM workers can build system profiles indicating their work preferences. When roles are available in their preferred location, industry, or job type, recruiters can more easily place them.





# BOOSTING INSPECTION SCORES WITH BETTER STAFFING PRACTICES



## CHALLENGE

A private university in Rhode Island struggled with low inspection scores and poor performance from unmotivated janitorial team members who were not meeting university standards. The inspection scores were averaging in the low 70s, far below expectations.



## SOLUTION

The university selected ABM to help address morale and performance issues. ABM identified several factors contributing to the subpar performance, including improper management, insufficient training/support, and inadequate staffing. ABM's experienced manager implemented the ABM Way – an approach that offers excellence through documented, standardized best practices. The manager implemented training and team member appreciation programs to make the staff feel better prepared and valued. The manager also leveraged ABM's quality control program to inspect service, trend performance, and identify issues.

## BENEFITS

*By re-engaging staff with better training and accountability measures, ABM significantly improved quality, transparency, and client satisfaction:*

- Increased productivity rates while reducing labor hours and supply use
- Improved performance and customer satisfaction through better communication and complaint resolution
- Improved motivation through experienced, positive leadership
- **Increased quality scores** from the low 70's to nearly 90 by the fifth month of the partnership



## 2

# INCREASE ENROLLMENT WITH HIGH-QUALITY FACILITIES



Facilities are an important consideration for parents and students. Operating a high-quality campus can help combat declining enrollment. By taking a proactive approach to infrastructure improvements and maintenance, you can enhance the campus experience and reduce long-term costs, backlogs, and project delays.

## 2 3

*of college students factor campus facilities into their college decision.<sup>2</sup>*







## BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

*After partnering with ABM, student retention rose **6%** at a private liberal arts college in South Carolina.*

## SINGLE-SOURCE ACCOUNTABILITY



With a single company overseeing all facility services, institutions can ensure accountability, allowing for improved efficiency and communication, as well as quicker resolution of issues.

## RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

Involve custodial and maintenance experts at the beginning of any new facility initiatives (upgrades and new architecture). ABM experts can provide guidance for the most effective and durable equipment and building product choices, which helps maintaining clean spaces and can lower costs over time.

## PROACTIVE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Create a plan for proactive maintenance including steps to improve operational systems and reduce energy and resource waste.

## PROVIDE HEALTHY SPACES



Indoor environments greatly impact students in multiple ways, from attention levels to drop-out rates. Studies show that light, air, and facility quality have real effects on student success. To help your students breathe well, see well, and be well, meeting deferred maintenance needs and investing in the built environment quality is key. ABM projects create opportunities for you to improve spaces for everyone.

## ENERGY PERFORMANCE CONTRACTING

ABM's national education experts can analyze your facility's infrastructure, energy usage, operating costs, and sustainability metrics. Then, we develop a solution that creates the funding needed to make recommended improvements.

*Compared to the national average, schools that prioritized campus appearance and partnered with ABM have:*



**8.6%**

**HIGHER  
APPLICATION  
RATES**

**7%**

**HIGHER  
RETENTION  
RATES**

**3.5%**

**HIGHER  
ENROLLMENT  
RATES FOR NEW  
STUDENTS<sup>3</sup>**



# Improving Energy Efficiency and IAQ with Smart Capital Improvement Planning



## CHALLENGE

A public research university in Ohio needed a comprehensive, performance-based energy services and energy-related capital improvement program. The program needed to be financed through a performance-based contract with guaranteed savings at no initial cost.



## SOLUTION

ABM partnered with the university to provide a quality capital improvement program that lowered their operating costs and increased their energy efficiency. The program also ensured peak efficiency through ABM's proven preventive maintenance and training/support programs.

The solution included campus-wide lighting retrofits, eliminating 30 pieces of equipment into one consolidated boiler and chiller systems, retro-commissioning mechanical equipment and air handlers, campus-wide web-based control systems, a new chilled water plant, and installing a geothermal cooling system.

## BENEFITS

*ABM helped the university to generate significant energy and operating savings:*

- Energy and operating savings of **\$35.8 million** over 15 years
- 40% reduced energy consumption
- Improved indoor air quality
- Free cooling for the student center all winter or until outside air temperatures reach about 80°
- Improved the efficiency and extended the lifespan of the university's equipment



**\$35.8**  
**MILLION**  
**IN SAVINGS**

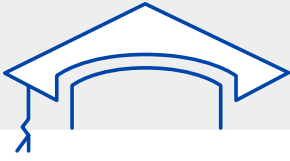
**40%**  
**ENERGY**  
**REDUCTION**

INCREASE ENROLLMENT WITH HIGH-QUALITY FACILITIES



### 3

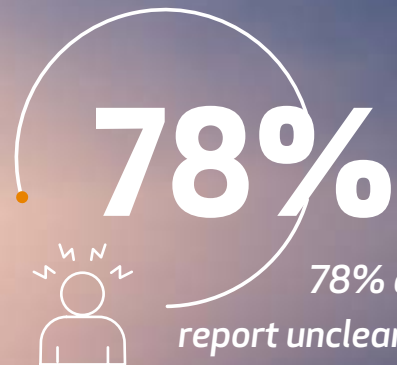
## IMPROVE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



Student physical and mental health have become barriers to successful academic outcomes, including graduation rates. Maintaining a clean and hygienic campus environment is essential to ensure the health and safety of students on campus.



88% of students find that a lack of cleanliness can be a distraction to their learning experience.<sup>4</sup>



78% of students report unclean areas impacted their physical health and increased their stress levels.<sup>5</sup>

Schools that partner with ABM have an average of **5%** higher student satisfaction compared to the national average.<sup>6</sup>

An infographic featuring a large blue circle containing the text '5%'. The background of this section is a photograph of a young man in a plaid shirt reading a book in front of a modern building with large glass windows.

Percentage	Statement
5%	Schools that partner with ABM have an average of 5% higher student satisfaction compared to the national average. <sup>6</sup>





# BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

## REDUCED NOISE LEVELS



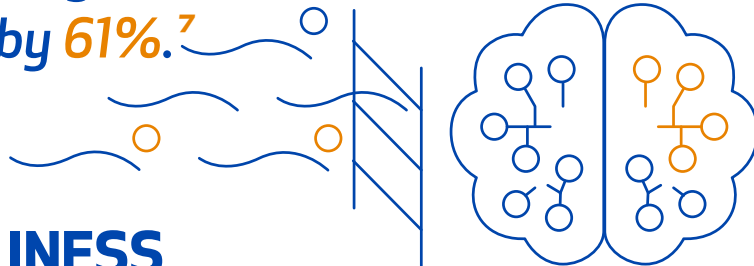
ABM can implement the following measures to reduce the impact of noise levels on student stress, anxiety, and academic performance:

- Sound insulation panels in walls
- Sound-reducing windows
- High-quality seals and gaskets on doorways
- Updated cleaning equipment and HVAC systems

## IMPROVE INDOOR AIR TEMPERATURE & QUALITY

Improved HVAC systems and maintenance result in better indoor air quality and improved classroom performance. ABM's experts calculate ideal temperatures and energy usage, improve inside humidity levels and ventilation, and conduct proactive maintenance to extend the HVAC system's life.

*Improved air quality and ventilation improved cognitive performance scores by **61%.***



## MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS

Through detailed policies and procedures, clear job expectations and assignments, measurable standards, and proper training, ABM ensures that cleaning operations are carried out effectively and safely.

## INSTALL APPROPRIATE LIGHTING

ABM experts help facility managers identify the right lighting solutions and integrate measures, ranging from retrofits to lighting design and certification, that reduce energy consumption without sacrificing safety.

## Creating a Cost-Effective Campus that Keeps Students Coming Back



### CHALLENGE

A private liberal arts college in Ohio needed to update its campus infrastructure and facilities to support its transformation and improve the student experience. However, declining enrollment trends and changing demographics put a crunch on the small college's budget.



### SOLUTION

ABM provided a customized preventive maintenance schedule within the college's budget, integrating janitorial, landscaping, and maintenance services, and transitioned key team members to improve operational efficiencies and results. ABM's solution also included a proactive CMMS, green cleaning practices, staff rightsizing, employee retention initiatives, safety culture and specialty services.

### BENEFITS

*With ABM's partnership, the college was able to enhance the campus experience:*

- Improved student retention by **7%**
- Improved aesthetics and visual impact of campus grounds
- Updated green cleaning practices through **ABM GreenCare®**

**+7%**  
**STUDENT  
RETENTION**

IMPROVE THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE



# 4

## PRIORITIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY



The effects of climate change are becoming more apparent, and educational facilities must take a proactive role in reducing their carbon footprint. In addition to reducing environmental impact, implementing sustainability measures can also reduce costs and improve the learning environment.

*By leveraging ABM's sustainability expertise, one school increased student retention by **6%**.*



**+6%**  
**STUDENT  
RETENTION**

**85%** of college students say it is at least somewhat important for their campus to prioritize sustainability.<sup>8</sup>



*ABM prioritizes sustainability objectives, including green cleaning, recycling, and Energy Star and LEED certification.*

These sustainability efforts have helped increase student retention and generate capital through energy and operational savings.



## BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

### CLEANING CHEMICALS



To ensure cleanliness and the well-being of people and the environment, ABM uses Green Seal certified and bio-based cleaning alternatives, as well as electrically activated water systems that produce safe, non-toxic daily cleaning and sanitizing solutions onsite.

### WASTE MANAGEMENT & RECYCLING

ABM's experts can guide you through an effective waste management program that involves assessment, planning, training, and more:

- Understand waste streams
- Develop a plan to reduce waste generation
- Implement recycling and composting

### E-MOBILITY OPPORTUNITIES

To help you implement an accessible, convenient EV charging program, ABM considers the full impact of e-mobility on your campus and provides support in reaching short- and long-term infrastructure needs.

### UPGRADE SYSTEMS FOR ENERGY SAVINGS

ABM can implement improvements like efficient HVAC systems, dynamic valves, and better insulation, which can lead to significant savings on energy bills and positively impact both productivity and engagement.





## Driving Down Energy Consumption to Deliver Guaranteed Savings

ABM reduced a Georgia university's energy use by **29%** with Bundled Energy Solutions.



### CHALLENGE

A major university in Georgia discovered that 5% of their campus square footage was driving nearly 30% of their campus energy use. The school needed a solution that would help them reduce consumption on a limited budget.



### SOLUTION

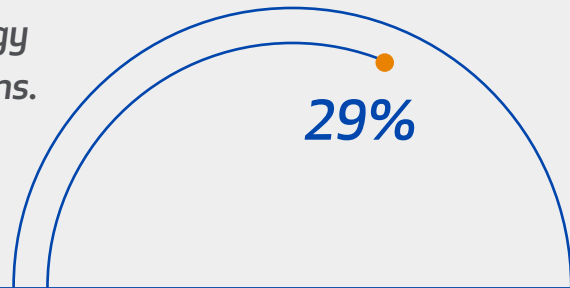
After identifying laboratory space as intensive energy consumers, ABM's facility engineers investigated methods for cutting energy costs, reducing carbon footprints, and providing safer, more reliable working environments for researchers. Our energy savings performance contract provided the combined technical and financial solution needed to upgrade fume hood controls for more than 140 lab spaces without upfront costs.

### BENEFITS

*In addition to guaranteed savings of **\$11.7 million** over a ten-year period, the project helped provide:*

- Safer, energy-efficient, and more reliable research environments
- Opportunities to address deferred maintenance and existing problems
- Reduced air pressure issues and excessive air exchange rates
- Mitigated temperature extremes
- Significant gains in sustainability goals
- Reduced carbon footprint

**PRIORITIZE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY**



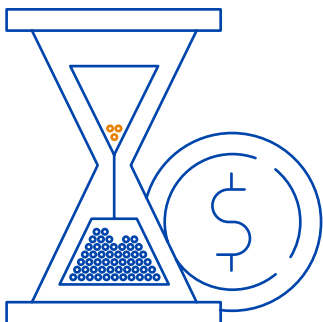
# 5

## ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE



Higher education institutions face a variety of challenges when it comes to managing their operations, from maintaining aging facilities to keeping up with changing technologies and student needs. To address these challenges, institutions can implement effective facilities, operations, and management (FOM) programs that prioritize quality, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness.

*Higher education facilities face urgent deferred renewal of more than **\$112** billion.<sup>9</sup>*





# BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES

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A well-run and sustainable FOM program is the result of a carefully orchestrated and executed sequence of events and actions, including the following:



*Higher education facility leaders manage 6 billion square feet of campus spaces across the U.S.<sup>10</sup>*

## LEADERSHIP

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APPA's Leadership principles – setting direction and vision, being ethical, communicating effectively, demonstrating values, empowering staff, and promoting self-understanding – can help institutions to develop organizational culture and leadership structure to meet facility goals.<sup>11</sup>

## BUILD CAMPUS SUPPORT

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To foster trust and support within the campus community, ABM engages in the following practices:

- **Consistent Stakeholder Communication**

Providing consistent communication and performance reports is essential for building customer trust and involvement in the management process.

- **Ongoing Collaboration Opportunities**

ABM works with institutions to define their facility goals and develop formal plans to prioritize and achieve them. Our managers document every meeting and provide follow-up to ensure all parties are aligned.

# ESSENTIAL ACTIONS & PRACTICES

*There are core programs and systems that must be in place for successful and sustainable facility operations delivery. ABM implements the following practices in every facility:*

- **Standard Operating Practices (SOPs)**

It is important to note that we develop general SOPs and customize them for each location based on their needs/goals.

- **Facilities Needs Assessments and Capital Planning**

ABM performs assessments, maintenance procedural improvements, and upgrades to help higher education facilities address operational inefficiencies with limited capital.

- **Preventative Maintenance Program**

By integrating labor hours, regulatory requirements, and manufacturer recommendations, ABM determines the proper actions and frequencies for preventive maintenance.

- **Safety Operations and Inspections**

Frequent safety training, procedures, and standards are critical for preventing incidents and meeting regulatory compliance. All employees are trained and registered in Safety Inspections, SWOP (Safe Work Observation Program), and the Safety Program.

- **Quality Assurance (QA) Process**

To track and report on program compliance and responsiveness to requests, ABM leverages a unique quality assurance program.

- **Labor Management**

All ABM employees receive onboarding and ongoing training and are required to follow protocols for timekeeping, work scheduling, tracking parts and materials use, and performing inspections.







## PLATFORMS & REPORTING

When properly installed and used, platforms like computerized maintenance management systems (CMMS) enable you to integrate systems and connect people to the right information at the right time.

To help our clients fully leverage their data, ABM employs the following practices:

- Provide reports, dashboards, and executive summaries to document performance and support planning.
- Adhere to strict requirements for record-keeping, form completion, and inspections to meet key performance indicator (KPI) targets and timelines.
- Develop and maintain accurate standards for monitoring and measuring key aspects of facility operations such as building locations and details, supply and equipment, sourcing and management, work types and priorities defined, personnel metrics, and parts and assets inventory.



## SCHEDULED SYSTEM ASSESSMENTS

Post-implementation, facility partners should continue to engage with institutions to ensure that goals are being met and to identify any emerging needs or challenges. ABM regional and local leaders meet with clients at least two times per year, or at a frequency agreed upon with the client, to discuss the following:

- Review contract specifications and compliance
- Review CMMS system
- Perform condition assessment of buildings, systems, equipment, and grounds
- Review personnel skills and training programs
- Correct staffing levels by position
- Review compliance with ABM policies and practices
- Ensure SOPs are in place, followed, and documented
- Ensure required permits, licenses, and regulatory reporting are current and on file



*We create a full report of each visit with observations and recommendations for next steps.*

**76%**

*of facility managers say the prioritization strategy is the most critical component to improve the effectiveness of their planned preventive maintenance operations.<sup>12</sup>*



# Improving Operations with a Data-Driven Approach



## CHALLENGE

A private university in Pennsylvania was struggling to manage the full scope custodial services for its facilities, including cleaning, hard surface floor care, event setup and cleanup, athletic facilities cleaning, trash sorting for recycling, and residence cleaning. This led to decreased student satisfaction and unnecessary deterioration of its assets. The school was also facing budget cuts, so it needed a solution to improve cleaning and reduce costs.



## SOLUTION

Leveraging the information gathered from monthly performance reports, ABM collaborated with the university's management to identify efficiencies and opportunities to improve cleaning quality.

ABM then conducted an intensive two-week facility-specific orientation and training program for management and service workers, focusing on achieving quality and productivity goals.

## BENEFITS

By partnering with ABM, the university was able to achieve its custodial needs and maintain a clean environment while also improving its bottom line:

- Increased productivity levels
- Decreased staffing levels
- Reduced annual expenses by more than **\$100,000**

**ENHANCE OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE**



**\$100K**  
**ANNUAL  
EXPENSE  
REDUCTION**



## ABM CAN HELP YOU DELIVER A HIGHER DEGREE OF CAMPUS CARE

- Electrical Power
- Energy
- EV Charging
- Facilities Engineering
- HVAC & Mechanical
- Janitorial
- Landscape & Turf
- Lighting
- Mission Critical
- Parking & Transportation
- Specialty Services
- And more

### *Our Values Reflect Your Values*



#### **RESPECT**

Every person brings value and is acknowledged as an asset to our team.



#### **COLLABORATION**

We believe that we can do better and achieve more when we work together and learn from our collective experiences.



#### **INNOVATION**

We bring fresh ideas and data-driven insights to solve business challenges. We ask: What if? Why not? What's next?



#### **INTEGRITY**

We are sincere, trustworthy, and accountable. We tell the truth and do not tolerate behavior that breaches our values.



#### **EXCELLENCE**

We deliver consistent, reliable service, but we don't stop there. We are committed to exceeding expectations.



#### **TRUST**

We build confidence and demonstrate that we are worthy of keeping it.

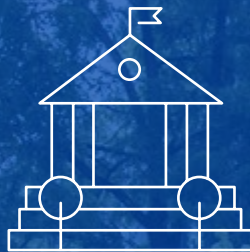


# HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE



**100+**

**YEARS OF  
EXPERIENCE  
SERVING THE  
EDUCATION  
MARKET**



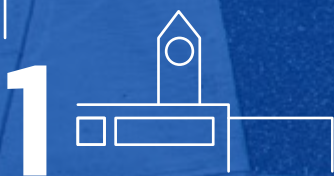
**150+**

**HIGHER  
EDUCATION  
INSTITUTIONS**



**18K+**

**TEAM  
MEMBERS  
IN EDUCATION**



**1  
BILLION SQ. FT. OF  
EDUCATION SPACE CLEANED  
BY ABM ANNUALLY**





# DELIVER A HIGHER DEGREE OF CARE WITH



[ABM.COM/HIGHERED](https://abm.com/highered)

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# SOURCES

- 1 Need for speed: 80% of candidates want faster response times from recruiters
- 2 Inside and Out, Facilities Matter
- 3 National Center for Education Statistics
- 4 BYU-assisted national study shows school cleanliness affects learning
- 5 Cleanliness & Learning in Higher Education
- 6 MyPlan.com
- 7 Green office environments linked with higher cognitive function scores
- 8 Actions and Hopes of the Sustainability-Focused Student
- 9-10 Changing the Facilities Backlog Conversation in Higher Education
- 11 APPA Body of Knowledge: Leadership
- 12 Data-Driven Analysis for Facility Management in Higher Education Institution

